

REMARKS:

The Office action mailed August 12, 2004 has been received and carefully considered. Reconsideration of the application as amended hereby is respectfully requested.

Claims 4 and 7 were objected to as depending from a rejected claim. Claim 4 has been divided and rewritten independently as new Claims 10 and 12. In particular, original Claim 4 called for alternative ranges on the amount of imide and this is now recited in the two independent claims rather than in a single claim. Claim 7 has likewise been divided and rewritten as independent Claims 13 and 14. New Claim 11 has been added to depend from Claim 10. The claims have also been amended to remove possible ambiguity. Consequently, it is urged that Claims 10 to 14 are now allowable.

Original Claims 1 to 3, 5, 6, 8 and 9 were rejected on the basis of Matsui, et al. Claim 1 has been amended to better distinguish over Matsui, et al. In particular, Claim 1 now calls for the hydrocarbon to not contain tertiary carbon atoms, that is the hydrocarbon is a primary or secondary hydrocarbon or mixtures of such.

The prior art has generally found that hydroperoxides can be prepared from hydrocarbons using imide compounds, but at the cost of requiring a large amount of imide and finding effective results with only tertiary hydrocarbons (that is, hydrocarbons

containing a tertiary atom).

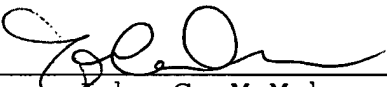
The inventors of the present application have found that catalyzing the reaction with a cyclic imide and an alkaline metal compound, not only improves the selectivity and speed of the process, but allows the process to be utilized effectively in conjunction with primary and secondary hydrocarbon stock. Claim 1 has been amended to emphasize this aspect of the invention and it is urged that neither Matsui, et al. or any of the other art of record teaches or suggests the invention as now claimed. Nor does Matsui, et al. suggest that the process can be used effectively with primary and secondary hydrocarbons by utilizing a catalyst of a cyclic imide and an alkaline metal compound. Therefore, it is urged that Claim 1 along with the claims that depend from Claim 1 are now allowable over the art of record.

In summary, it is believed that Claims 1 to 3, 5, 6 and 10 to 18 are now in condition for allowance and notice to that effect is earnestly solicited.

The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned by telephone, if prosecution of this application can be expedited thereby.

Respectfully Submitted,

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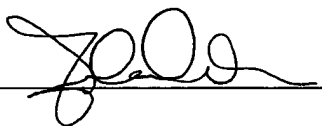


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Pilar de Frutos Escrig, et al.
(Applicant)

By



December 17, 2004

(Date of Signature)